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FARM FACTS

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SUMMER DROUGHT TAKES TOLL ON TENNESSEE AGRICULTURE

During 1999, farmers across Tennessee watched as one of the most promising growing seasons in years turned abruptly dismal due to a long summer drought. All hopes of record-breaking yields quickly disappeared as the number of days without rain continued to mount. Both crops and pastures baked in constant, relentless, extreme heat and drought. The State's soybeans seem to have been the hardest hit. Soybean yields averaged only 18 bushels an acre, well below the five-year average and the lowest yield in the State since 1983. Gene Danekas, State Statistician for Tennessee explained the low yields by saying, "The lack of moisture last summer led to a very light pod set and poor pod fill. Farmers reported that beans were quite small with some less than half the normal size." The State's cotton crop was also adversely affected by the drought, but overall production was up from 1998 due to a 27 percent increase in harvested acreage. Yields for corn and burley tobacco were actually up from the previous year, despite being below earlier expectations.

1999 DISASTROUS FOR TENNESSEE SOYBEANS

Ideal weather conditions in the Spring allowed soybean planting to progress ahead of normal during 1999 and allowed the plants to get off to an excellent start. Crop conditions throughout the State remained mostly good up until August, when the lack of moisture and extreme heat began taking its toll on the crop. Relentless hot and dry weather throughout the remainder of the growing season caused the once promising crop to take an abrupt turn for the worse. Final soybean yield, at 18 bushels an acre, was well below 1998's yield of 29 bushels and the five-year average of 33 bushels. With such poor yield potential, a greater than normal amount of the 1.25 million acres planted was not harvested for beans and was either cut for hay or abandoned. Total production from the 1.19 million harvested acres, at 21.4 million bushels, was down 39 percent from 1998 and the lowest production since 1966.

TRANSPLANTING DATE KEY TO '99 TOBACCO

The dates of transplanting and the timing of rainfall were the main factors affecting tobacco yields in 1999. Farmers who transplanted their tobacco in early May reported excellent to average yields, while later set tobacco had only average yields, or in extreme situations a total loss. The reason for the difference was that the late tobacco baked in the hot, dry conditions while the early to mid-season tobacco benefitted from timely rains. Burley

growers produced 92.8 million pounds in 1999 with an average yield of 1,820 pounds per acre, 25 pounds more than in 1998 but slightly below the five-year average. Type 22 and Type 23 dark fire-cured tobacco yields were 2,150 and 2,200 pounds per acre, respectively. Type 22, eastern dark fire-cured production at 15.3 million pounds, was 11 percent below the previous year. Type 23, western dark fire-cured production, at 1.25 million, was 15 percent below 1998. Type 35, dark air-cured production, at 1.23 million pounds, was 15 percent above a year earlier. Curing conditions were less than desirable during 1999 and led to delays in preparing the tobacco crop for market. The good news is that some of the tobacco, which was cut early because of drought-stress, improved in quality during October.

COTTON PRODUCTION UP SLIGHTLY

Despite wet field conditions early, most cotton growers were able to plant their crop sooner than normal. The majority of the crop was rated in good-to-excellent condition until the end of July, due to ideal growing conditions. The main problem in 1999, however, was the yield reducing effects of the relentless dry August weather which caused poor boll development and higher than normal boll shed. Growers reported that August was one of the poorest growing months they had ever seen. As a result, Tennessee's cotton yield averaged 501 pounds of lint per acre, well below 1998's yield of 589 pounds and the five-year average of 623 pounds. Poor prices, coupled with the marginal quality, discouraged a second picking; a practice that normally boosts yields significantly. Harvest of this year's crop was nearly a month ahead of normal and the earliest completion date since official records began in 1969. Total production from the 565,000 harvested acres, at 590,000 bales, was 44,000 bales more than was produced during 1998.

In This Issue

Annual Tennessee Crop Estimates

U.S. Highlights, Annual Crop Estimates

U.S. & Tennessee Milk Production

U.S. Broilers

U.S. Highlights, Grain Stocks

Cotton Ginnings

CORN YIELDS HIGHLY VARIABLE

Ideal weather through mid-July provided for adequate pollination for the majority of the State's corn crop and producers were optimistic for better than average yields. Fortunately, most corn had developed before the drought began, but some later planted fields did suffer adversely. Final average yield, at 102 bushels per acre, was up six bushels from 1998 but 8 bushels below the five-year average. Total production was 58.1 million bushels from 570,000 acres harvested for grain, the lowest productions since 1993. An additional 55,000 acres were cut for silage with an average yield of 14 tons per acre.

HAY PRODUCTION DOWN DUE TO DROUGHT

Farmers reported that the first cutting of hay the Spring of 1999 was excellent in Tennessee, but additional cuttings were limited by the extremely dry conditions. Alfalfa production was 93,000 tons from 30,000 acres, 22 percent less than was produced in 1998. All other hay production was 3.70 million tons from 1.85 million acres, 4 percent below 1998. Due to poor pasture conditions, many cattle producers started feeding hay around the first of August, well ahead of normal. As a result, hay stocks on December 1 were estimated at 2.66 million tons, the lowest since 1993. New seeding of alfalfa, at 3,000 acres, were down 1,000 from 1998.

2000 WHEAT ACREAGE UP 16 PERCENT

Tennessee farmers seeded 580,000 acres of winter wheat this past fall, up 80,000 from the fall of 1998. Ideal conditions this fall for seeding, record yields during 1999, and favorable prices appear to be the main factors in the increase in acreage. Planting of the 2000 crop was completed by the end of November, slightly ahead of normal.

CROP ESTIMATES: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, FINAL 1999, WITH COMPARISONS ¹

Crop	Unit	Planted Acres		Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999
CROP ESTIMATES: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, FINAL 1999, WITH COMPARISONS									
Thousands				Number of Units		Thousands			
TENNESSEE									
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	---	---	12,500	12,000
Corn ²	bu.	700	630	620	570	96	102	59,520	58,140
Corn for silage	ton	---	---	65	55	14	14	910	770
Cotton ³	lb.	450	570	445	565	589	501	546	590
Sorghum ²	bu.	20	20	16	18	70	70	1,120	1,260
Sorghum for silage	ton	---	---	2	1	15	10	30	10
Hay, All	ton	---	---	1,785	1,880	2.22	2.02	3,969	3,793
Alfalfa	ton	---	---	35	30	3.40	3.10	119	93
All Other	ton	---	---	1,750	1,850	2.20	2.00	3,850	3,700
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	---	---	3,200	5,000
Soybeans ²	bu.	1,250	1,250	1,210	1,190	29	18	35,090	21,420
Tobacco, All	lb.	---	---	59,415	59,270	1,870	1,866	111,100	110,569
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	---	---	7,300	7,100	2,330	2,150	17,009	15,265
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	---	---	0,590	0,570	2,500	2,200	1,475	1,254
Burley (31)	lb.	---	---	51,000	51,000	1,795	1,820	91,545	92,820
One-sucker (35)	lb.	---	---	0,525	0,600	2,040	2,050	1,071	1,230
Winter Wheat ²	bu.	570	500	370	340	41	54	15,170	18,360
UNITED STATES									
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	---	---	11,387,400	10,614,800
Corn ²	bu.	80,165	77,431	72,589	70,537	134.4	133.8	9,758,685	9,437,337
Corn for silage	ton	---	---	5,913	6,062	16.1	15.9	95,479	96,169
Cotton ³	lb.	13,392.5	14,855.0	10,683.6	13,381.0	625	608	13,918.2	16,952.9
Sorghum ²	bu.	9,626	9,288	7,723	8,544	67.3	69.7	519,933	595,166
Sorghum for Silage	ton	---	---	308	320	11.4	11.6	3,526	3,716
Hay, All	ton	---	---	60,076	63,160	2.53	2.52	151,780	159,077
Alfalfa	ton	---	---	23,672	23,985	3.48	3.50	82,310	83,924
All other	ton	---	---	36,404	39,175	1.91	1.92	69,470	75,153
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	---	---	2,429,300	2,502,100
Soybeans ²	bu.	72,025	73,780	70,441	72,476	38.9	36.5	2,741,014	2,642,908
Tobacco, All	lb.	---	---	717,605	644,250	2,062	1,980	1,479,867	1,275,438
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	---	---	11,150	10,850	2,325	2,167	25,922	23,515
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	---	---	4,190	4,120	2,762	2,545	11,573	10,484
Burley (31)	lb.	---	---	307,100	300,400	1,896	1,812	582,336	544,202
One-sucker (35)	lb.	---	---	2,975	3,450	2,238	2,133	6,657	7,358
Winter Wheat ²	bu.	46,449	43,431	40,126	35,572	46.9	47.8	1,880,733	1,699,989

¹ Data are from the latest estimates available, either from the current report or previous reports. ² Planted for all purposes and harvested acreage and production for grain.

³ Production in 480-lb. Net weight bales.

U.S. ANNUAL CROP HIGHLIGHTS

Corn for grain production was estimated at 9.44 billion bushels, down 3 percent from the 1998 crop and down 1 percent from the November 1 forecast. The 1999 production ranks as the fourth highest production on record behind the 1994, 1998, and 1992 respective crop years. The U. S. yield of 133.8 bushels per acre, was down 0.6 bushel from last year.

Sorghum grain production in 1999 was estimated at 595 million bushels, up 14 percent from 1998. Area harvested for grain was estimated 8.5 million acres, up 11 percent from 1998. Average grain yield, at 69.7 bushels per acre, was 2.4 bushels above the 1998 average yield.

Rice production in 1999 totaled 210 million cwt., down slightly from the November 1 forecast but up 12 percent from 1998. The 1999 production is the highest on record. The previous record production was set in 1994 at 198 million cwt. The average yield per acre for all U.S. rice is estimated at 5,908 pounds per acre, 21 pounds below the November 1 forecast. This is the third highest yield on record behind the 1994 yield of 5,964 pounds per acre.

Soybean production in 1999 totaled 2.64 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the November 1 forecast, 4 percent below 1998 and is the third highest production. The average yield per acre in 1999 is estimated at 36.5 bushels, 0.2 bushel below the November 1 forecast and is 2.4 bushels below the 1998 yield.

All cotton production is forecast at 17.0 million 480-pound bales, up less than 1 percent from last month, and up 22 percent from 1998. Yield is expected to average 608 pounds per harvested acre, down 17 pounds from last year. Texas production was decreased 56,000 bales from December's forecast, while California's production was increased 45,000 bales.

TENNESSEE MILK PRODUCTION: October-December quarterly production of milk was 345 million pounds, down 3 percent from the October-December period in 1998. The average number of milk cows was 95,000 head, 6,000 head less than the same period a year earlier.

MILK COWS AND PRODUCTION: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, PRELIMINARY OCTOBER-DECEMBER, 1998-1999

State	Oct-Dec Milk Cows ¹		Oct-Dec Milk Production ²		Change From 1998
	1998	1999	1998	1999	
	1,000 Head	1,000 Head	Million Pounds	Million Pounds	Percent
Tennessee	101	95	357	345	-3.4
United States	9,137	9,178	38,937	40,428	3.8

¹ Includes dry cows, excludes heifers not yet fresh. ² Excludes milk sucked by calves. ³ May not add due to rounding.

BROILER EGGS SET IN 15 SELECTED STATES UP 1 PERCENT: Commercial hatcheries in the 15-State weekly program set in incubators 180 million eggs during the week ending January 15, 2000. This was up 1 percent from the eggs set the corresponding week a year earlier. Average hatchability for chicks hatched during the week was 82 percent. Average hatchability is calculated by dividing chicks hatched during the week by eggs set three weeks earlier.

BROILER CHICKS PLACED UP 2 PERCENT: Broiler growers in the 15-State weekly program placed 145 million chicks for meat production during the week ending January 15, 2000. Placements were up 2 percent from the comparable week in 1999. Cumulative placements from January 2, 2000, through January 15, 2000, were 289 million, up 1 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. CORN AND SOYBEAN STOCKS DOWN SLIGHTLY; U.S. ALL WHEAT STOCKS DOWN 1 PERCENT

Corn stocks in all positions on December 1, 1999 totaled 8.02 billion bushels, down slightly from December 1, 1998. Of the total stocks, 5.18 billion bushels were stored on farms, down 3 percent from a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 2.84 billion bushels, were up 4 percent from a year ago. The September - November 1999 indicated disappearance was 3.20 billion bushels, 6 percent above the disappearance of 3.01 billion bushels during the same period a year earlier.

Soybeans stored in all positions on December 1, 1999 totaled 2.18 billion bushels, down fractionally from December 1, 1998. On-farm stocks estimated at 1.15 billion bushels were down 3 percent from the same period a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 1.03 billion bushels, were 3 percent higher than December 1, 1998. Indicated disappearance for the September-November 1999 quarter totaled 809 million bushels, up 7 percent from the same quarter in 1998.

All wheat in all storage positions December 1, 1999 totaled 1.88 billion bushels, down 1 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are 649 million bushels and off-farm stocks equal 1.23 billion bushels. The on-farm number is down 5 percent while the off-farm is up 1 percent. The indicated September - November 1999 disappearance of 566 million bushels is up 16 percent from the same period in 1998.

COTTON GINNINGS: RUNNING BALES GINNED, PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, CROP YEARS 1996-1999

Crop and State	Running Bales Ginned			
	1996	1997	1998	1999
All Cotton				
Alabama	740,500	512,050	531,600	614,350
Arizona	748,600	690,750	501,350	590,100
Arkansas	1,588,500	1,623,850	1,172,300	1,388,700
California	2,507,300	2,486,850	1,416,000	1,955,250
Georgia	1,966,250	1,722,350	1,445,400	1,485,050
Louisiana	1,297,650	1,001,300	652,400	918,600
Mississippi	1,815,150	1,763,100	1,400,150	1,680,350
Missouri	555,600	546,850	337,750	450,400
New Mexico	84,450	72,450	64,400	58,700
North Carolina	939,750	902,600	1,004,250	782,600
Oklahoma	112,550	168,950	131,700	131,700
South Carolina	427,800	378,700	330,050	260,750
Tennessee	661,850	645,900	529,800	574,200
Texas	3,936,500	4,853,500	3,441,450	4,754,050
Virginia	150,300	131,300	133,550	133,100
United States	17,680,900	17,613,350	13,159,700	15,898,850
Amer-Pima				
Arizona	68,400	39,900	16,600	14,000
California	246,400	360,700	300,000	436,200
New Mexico	14,400	10,300	6,150	6,250
Texas	52,550	49,350	41,100	39,700
United States	381,750	460,250	363,850	496,150